



Lara.

2
THE
T R A G E D Y.
OF
Z A R A.

As it is Acted at the
THEATRES - ROYAL
IN
D R U R Y - L A N E
A N D
C O V E N T - G A R D E N.

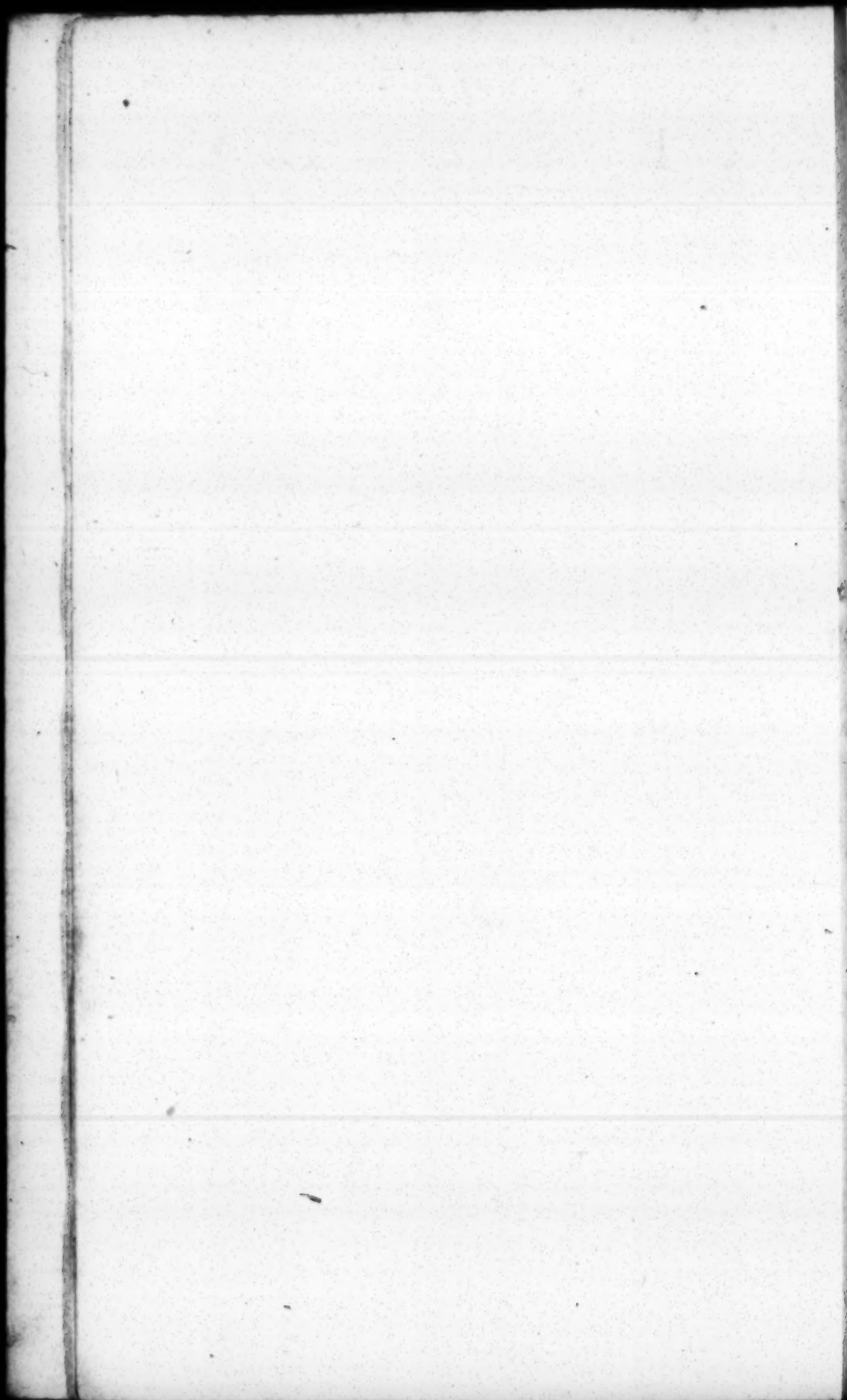
By A A R O N H I L L, Esq;



L O N D O N :

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M D C C L X X V I .



PROLOGUE.

THE French, howe'er mercurial they may seem,
 Extinguish half their fire, by critic phlegm:
 While English writers nature's freedom claim;
 And warm their scenes with an ungovern'd flame.
 'Tis strange that nature never should inspire
 A Racine's judgment, with a Shakespear's fire!

Howe'er to-night—(to prone i' e much we're loth)
 But—you've a chance, to have a taste of both.
 From English plays, Zara's French author fir'd,
 Confess'd his Muse, beyond herself, inspir'd;
 From rack'd O'hello's rage, he rais'd his style,
 And snatch'd the brand, that lights this tragic pile:
 Zara's success his utmost hopes outflow,
 And a twice twentieth weeping-audience drew.

As for our English friend, he leaves to you,
 Whate'er may seem to his performance due;
 No views of gain, his hopes or fears engage,
 He gives a child of leisure to the stage:
 Willing to try, if yet, forsaken nature,
 Can charm with any one remember'd feature.

Thus far, the author speaks—but now, the player,
 With trembling heart, prefers his humble prayer.
 To-night, the greatest venture of my life,
 Is lost, or sav'd as you receive—a wise:
 If time, you think, may ripen her, to merit,
 With gentle smiles, support her wav'ring spirit.
 Zara in France, at once, an actress rais'd,
 Warm'd into skill, by being kindly prais'd:
 O! cou'd such wonders here from favour flow,
 How would our Zara's heart, with transport glow!
 But she, alas! by juster fears oppress'd,
 Begs but your bare endurance, at the best.
 Her unskill'd tongue would simple nature speak,
 Nor dares her bounds, for false applauses break:
 Amidst a thousand faults, her best pretence
 To please—is unpresuming innocence.
 When a chaste heart's distress your grief demands,
 One silent tear outweighs a thousand hands.
 If she conveys the pleasing passions, right,
 Guard and support her, this decisive night:
 If she mistakes—or, finds her strength too small,
 Let interposing pity—break her fall.
 In you it rests, to save her or destroy,
 If she draws tears from you, I weep—for joy.



The Persons Represented.

Osman, *Sultan of Jerusalem.*

Lusignan, *Last of the Blood of the
Christian Kings of Jerusalem.*

Zara, } *Slaves to the Sultan.*
Selima, }

Nerestan, } *French Officers.*
Chatillon, }

Orasmin, *Minister to the Sultan.*

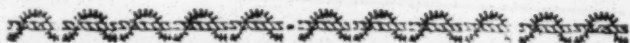
Melidor, *an Officer of the Seraglio.*



THE



T H E
T R A G E D Y
O F
Z A R A .



A C T I. S C E N E I.

Zara and Selima.

Selima.

IT moves my wonder, young and beauteous Zara,
Whence these new sentiments inspire your heart!
Your peace of mind increases with your charms;
Tears, now, no longer shade your eyes soft lustre:
You meditate, no more, those happy climes,
To which Nereftan will return to guide you:
You talk no more of that gay nation, now,
Where men adore their wives, and woman's power
Draws reverence from a polish'd people's softness;
Their husbands' equals, and their lovers' queens!
Free without scandal; wise, without restraint;
Their virtue, due to nature, not to fear!
Why have you ceas'd to wish this happy change?
A barr'd seraglio!—sad unsocial life!
Scorn'd, and a slave! all this has lost its terror:
And Syria rivals, now, the banks of Seine!

Zara. Joys, which we do not know, we do not wish;
My fate's bound in, by Sion's sacred wall;
Clos'd, from my infancy, within this palace,
Custom has learnt, from time, the power to please:
I claim no share in the remoter world,
The Sultan's property, his will my law;
Unknowing all, but him, his power, his fame;
To live his subject, is my only hope,

All, else, an empty dream.—

Sel. Have you forgot

Absent Nereïtan, then? whose gen'rous friendship
So nobly vow'd redemption from your chains!
How oft have you admir'd his dauntless soul!
Osman, his conqueror, by his courage charm'd,
Trusted his faith, and, on his word, releas'd him:
Tho' not return'd in time,—we, yet, expect him.
Nor had his noble journey other motive,
Than to procure our ransom:—And is this,
This dear, warm hope—become an idle dream?

Za. Since after two long years, he not returns,
'Tis plain, his promise stretch'd beyond his power:
A stranger, and a slave, unknown like him,
Proposing much, means little:—talks, and vows,
Delighted with a prospect of escape:—
He promis'd to redeem ten christians more,
And free us all, from slavery!—I own
I once admir'd th' unprofitable zeal,
But, now, it charms no longer.—

Sel. What if yet,

He, faithful, shou'd return, and hold his vow!
Would you not, then——

Za. No matter—Time is past;
And every thing is chang'd——

Sel. But, whence comes this?

Za. Go—'twere too much to tell thee Zara's fate;
The sultan's secrets, all, are sacred here:
But my fond heart delights to mix with thine.—
Some three months past, when thou, and other slaves,
Were forc'd to quit fair Jordan's flow'ry bank;
Heav'n, to cut short the anguish of my days,
Rais'd me to comfort, by a powerful hand!
This mighty Osman!

Sel. What of him?

Za. This sultan!

This conqueror of the christians! loves—

Sel. Whom?

Za. Zara!

Thou blushest, and I guess, thy thoughts accuse me;
But, know me better—'twas unjust suspicion:
All emperor, as he is, I cannot stoop
To honours, that bring shame and baseness with 'em:
Reason, and pride, those props of modesty,
Sustain my guarded heart, and strengthen virtue;
Rather than link to infamy, let chains

Embrace

Embrace me with a joy ; such love denies :
 No—I shall, now, astonish thee ;—his greatness
 Submits to own a pure, and honest flame ;
 Among the shining crowds, which live to please him,
 His whole regard is fix'd on me, alone :
 He offers marriage—and its rites, now, wait,
 To crown me empress of this eastern world.

Sel. Your virtue, and your charms, deserve it all :
 My heart is not surpriz'd, but struck, to hear it ;
 If, to be empress, can compleat your happiness,
 I rank myself, with joy, among your slaves :

Za. Be, still, my equal—and enjoy my blessings :
 For, thou partaking, they will bless me more :

Sel. Alas ! but heaven ! will it permit this marriage ?
 Will not this grandeur, falsely call'd a bliss,
 Plant bitterness, and root it, in your heart ?
 Have you forgot, you are of christian blood ?

Za. Ah me ! what hast thou said ? why wou'dst
 thou, thus,
 Recall my wav'ring thoughts ?—How know I, what,
 Or whence I am ? heaven kept it, hid, in darkness,
 Conceal'd me from myself, and from my blood.

Sel. Nerestan, who was born a christian, here,
 Asserts, that you, like him, had christian parents ;
 Besides—that cross, which, from your infant years,
 Has been preserv'd, was found upon your bosom,
 As if design'd by heaven, a pledge of faith,
 Due to the god, you purpose to forsake !

Za. Can my fond heart, on such a feeble proof,
 Embrace a faith, abhor'd by him I love ?
 I see, too plainly, custom forms us all ;
 Our thoughts, our morals, our most fix'd belief,
 Are consequences of our place of birth :
 Born beyond Ganges, I had been a pagan,
 In France a christian ;—I am here, a Saracen ;
 'Tis but instruction, all ! our parents' hand
 Writes, on our heart, the first, faint characters,
 Which time, re-tracing, deepens into strength,
 That nothing can efface, but death, or heaven ! —
 Thou wert not made a pris'ner in this place,
 'Till after reason, borrowing force from years,
 Had lent its lustre, to enlighten faith :—
 For me, who in my cradle was their slave,
 Thy christian doctrines were too lately, taught me :
 Yet, far from having lost the rev'rence due,
 This cross, as often as it meets my eye,

Strikes

Strikes thro' my heart a kind of awful fear!
 I honour, from my soul, the christian laws,
 Those laws, which, soft'ning nature, by humanity,
 Melt nations into brotherhood;—no doubt,
 Christians are happy; and 'tis just to love 'em.

Sel. Why have you then declar'd yourself their foe?
 Why will you join your hand with this proud Osman's?
 Who owes his triumph to the christians' ruin!

Za. Ah! who could slight the offer of his heart?
 Nay—for I mean to tell thee all my weakness;
 Perhaps, I had, ere now, profess'd thy faith,
 But Osman lov'd me—and I've lost it all:
 I think on none but Osman—my pleas'd heart,
 Fill'd with the blessing, to be lov'd by him,
 Wants room for other happiness: place thou,
 Before thy eyes, his merit, and his fame,
 His youth, yet, blooming but in manhood's dawn!
 How many conquer'd kings have swell'd his pow'r!
 Think, too, how lovely! how his brow becomes
 This wreath of early glories!—oh! my friend!
 I talk not of a scepter, which he gives me:
 No—to be charm'd with that, were thanks, too humble!
 Offensive tribute, and too poor for love!
 'Twas Osman won my heart, not Osman's crown:
 I love not, in him, aught, besides himself.
 Thou think'st, perhaps, that these are starts of passion;
 But, had the will of heav'n, less bent to bless him,
 Doom'd Osman to my chains, and me, to fill
 The throne, that Osman sits on—ruin and wretchedness,
 Catch and consume my wishes, but I wou'd—
 To raise me, to myself, descend to him.

Sel. Hark! the wish'd music sounds—'Tis he—
 he comes— [Exit Selima.]

Za. My heart prevented him, and found him near:
 Absent, two whole long days, the slow-pac'd hour,
 At last, is come—and gives him to my wishes!

*Enter Osman, reading a paper, which he re-
 delivers to Orasmin.*

Os. Wait my return—or, shou'd there be a cause,
 That may require my presence—do not fear
 To enter—ever mindful, that my own [Exit Orasmin]
 Follows my people's happiness.—At length,
 Cares have releas'd my heart—to love and Zara.

Za. 'Twas not in cruel absence, to deprive me
 Of your imperial image—every where,

You

You reign, triumphant: memory supplies
 Reflexion with your pow'r: and you, like heaven,
 Are always present—and are always gracious.

Of. The Sultans, my great ancestors, bequeath'd
 Their empire to me, but their taste they gave not;
 Their laws, their lives, their loves, delight not me;
 I know, our prophet smiles on am'rous wishes;
 And opens a wide field to vast desire:
 I know, that, at my will, I might possess;
 That, wasting tenderness, in wild profusion,
 I might look down, to my surrounded feet,
 And bless contending beauties.—I might speak,
 Serenely slothful, from within my palace,
 And bid my pleasure be my people's law.
 But, sweet as softness is, its end is cruel;
 I can look round, and count a hundred kings,
 Unconquer'd, by themselves, and slaves to others:
 Hence was Jerusalem to christians lost;
 But, heaven, to blast that unbelieving race,
 Taught me, to be a king, by thinking like one.
 Hence from the distant Euxine to the Nile,
 The trumpet's voice has wak'd the world to war;
 Yet, amidst arms and death, thy power has reach'd me;
 For thou didst in'st, like me, a languid love;
 Glory, and Zara join—and charm, together.

Za. I hear at once with blushes, and with joy,
 This passion, so unlike your country's customs.

Of. Passion, like mine, disdains my country's customs,
 The jealousy, the faintness, the distrust,
 The proud, superior, coldness of the east:
 I know to love you, Zara, with esteem;
 To trust your virtue, and to court your soul.
 Nobly confiding, I unveil my heart,
 And dare inform you, that 'tis all your own:
 My joys must, all, be yours—only my cares
 Shall lie, conceal'd, within—and reach not Zara.

Za. Oblig'd, by this excess of tenderness,
 How low, how wretched, was the lot of Zara!
 Too poor with aught, but thanks, to pay such blessings!

Of. Not so—I love—and wou'd be lov'd again;
 Let me confess it, I possess a soul,
 That what it wishes, wishes ardently.
 I shou'd believe, you hated, had you power
 To love, with moderation: 'tis my aim,
 In every thing, to reach supreme perfection.
 It, with an equal flame, I touch your heart,

Marriage

Marriage attends your smile—But know, 'twill make
Me wretched, if it makes not Zara happy.

Za. Ah! fir, if fuch a heart, as gen'rous *Osman's*,
Can, from my will, fubmit to take its blifs,
What mortal ever was decreed fo happy!
Pardon the pride, with which I own my joy;
Thus, wholly, to poffefs the man, I love!
To know, and to confefs, his will my fate!
To be the happy work of his dear hands!
To be——

Enter Orasmin.

Of. Already interrupted! what?
Who?——Whence?

Oras. This moment, fir, there is arriv'd
That christian flave, who, licens'd on his faith,
Went hence, to France——and, now return'd, prays
audience.

Za. [*Afide.*] O! heaven!

Of. Admit him—What?—Why comes he not?—

Oras. He waits without.—No christian dares approach
This place, long facred to the fultan's privacies.

Of. Go--bring him with thee--monarchs, like the fun,
Shine but in vain, unwarming, if unfeen;
With forms, and rev'ence, let the great approach us;
Not the unhappy;—every place, alike,
Gives the diftrefs'd a privilege to enter.— [*Exit Oras.*
I think, with horror, on thefe dreadful maxims,
Which harden kings, infenfibly, to tyrants.

Re-enter Orasmin, with Nereftan.

Neref. Imperial fultan! honour'd even by foes!
See me, return'd, regardful of my vow,
And punctual to difcharge a christian's duty:
I bring the ransom of the captive, Zara,
Fair Selima, the partner of her fortune,
And of ten christian captives, pris'ners, here.
You promis'd, fultan, if I fhould return,
To grant their raved liberty:—Behold,
I am return'd, and they are yours no more.
I wou'd have stretch'd my purpofe, to myfelf,
But fortune has deny'd it;—my poor all
Suffic'd, no further; and a noble poverty
Is, now, my whole poffeffion:—I redeem
The promis'd christians; for I taught 'em hope.
But, for myfelf, I come, again, your flave,

To

To wait the fuller hand of future charity.

Of. Christian! I must confess, thy courage charms me;

But let thy pride be taught, it treads too high,

When it presumes to climb above my mercy.

Go, ransomless, thyself---and carry back

Their unaccepted ransoms, join'd with gifts,

Fit to reward thy purpose:—instead of ten,

Demand a hundred christians; they are thine:

Take 'em—and bid 'em teach their haughty country,

They left some virtue, among Saracens.—

Be Lusignan alone excepted—He

Who boasts the blood of kings, and dares lay claim

To my Jerusalem—that claim his guilt!

Such is the law of states; had I been vanquish'd,

Thus had he said of me:—I mourn his lot,

Who must, in fetters, lost to day-light, pine,

And sigh away old age, in grief and pain—

For Zara—but to name her as a captive,

Were to dishonour language;—she's a prize,

Above thy purchase;—all the christian realms,

With all their kings to guide 'em, would unite

In vain, to force her from me—Go, retire—

Neresf. For Zara's ransom, with her own consent,

I had your royal word—For Lusignan—

Unhappy, poor, old man—

Of. Was I not heard?

Have I not told thee, Christian, all my will?

What, if I prais'd thee!—This presumptuous virtue,

Compelling my esteem, provokes my pride:

Be gone—and, when to-morrow's sun shall rise

On my dominions, be not found—too near me.

[*Exit Neresfian.*]

Za. [*Aside.*] Assist him! heaven!

Of. Zara, retire a moment—

Assume, throughout my palace, sovereign empire,

While I give orders, to prepare the pomp,

That waits, to crown thee mistress of my throne.

[*Leads her out, and returns.*]

Orafmin! didst thou mark th' imperious slave?

What cou'd he mean?—he sigh'd—and, as he went,

Turn'd, and look'd back at Zara!—didst thou mark it?

Oraf. Alas! my sovereign master! let not jealousy

Strike high enough, to reach your noble heart.

Of. Jealousy, saidst thou? I disdain it:—No!—

Distrust is poor: and a misplac'd suspicion

Invites, and justifies, the falshood fear'd.—

B

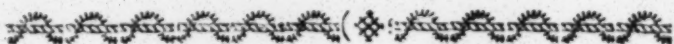
Yet,

Yet, as I love with warmth—so, I cou'd hate!
 But Zara is above disguise and art:—
 My love is stronger, nobler, than my power.
 Jealous!—I was not jealous! if I was,
 I am not—no—my heart—but, let us drown
 Remembrance of the word, and of the image;
 My heart is fill'd with a diviner flame.—
 Go—and prepare for the approaching nuptials;
 Zara to careful empire joins delight,
 I must allot one hour to thoughts of state,
 Then, all the smiling day is love, and Zara's.

Exit Orasmin.

Monarchs, by forms of pompous misery, press'd,
 In proud, unsocial misery, unblest'd,
 Wou'd, but for love's soft influence, curse their throne,
 And, among crowded millions, live alone.

End of the FIRST ACT.



ACT II. SCENE I.

Nerestan, Chatillon.

Chat. **M**atchless Nerestan! generous, and great!
 You, who have broke the chains of hopeless
 You, christian saviour! by a saviour sent! [slaves!
 Appear, be known, enjoy your due delight;
 The grateful weepers wait, to clasp your knees,
 They throng, to kiss the happy hand, that sav'd 'em:
 Indulge the kind impatience of their eyes,
 And at their head, command their hearts, for ever:

Neref. Illustrious Chatillon! this praise o'erwhelms me;
 What have I done, beyond a christian's duty?
 Beyond, what you wou'd, in my place, have done?

Chat. True—It is ev'ry honest christian's duty;
 Nay, 'tis the blessing of such minds as ours,
 For others' good to sacrifice our own.—
 Yet, happy they, to whom heav'n grants the power,
 To execute, like you, that duty's call!
 For us—the relics of abandon'd war,
 Forgot in France, and, in Jerusalem,
 Left, to grow old, in fetters;—Osman's father
 Consigned us to the gloom of a damp dungeon,
 Where, but for you, we must have groan'd out life;
 And native France have blest'd our eyes no more.

Neref. The will of gracious heaven, that soften'd
 Osman, Inspir'd

Inspir'd me, for your sakes; but, with our joy,
 Flows, mix'd, a bitter sadness—I had hop'd,
 To save, from their perversion, a young beauty,
 Who, in her infant innocence, with me,
 Was made a slave by cruel Noradin;
 When, sprinkling Syria, with the blood of christians,
 Cæsarea's walls saw Lusignan, surpriz'd,
 And the proud crescent rise, in bloody triumph:
 From this seraglio, having, young, escap'd,
 Fate, three years since, restor'd me to my chains;
 Then, sent to Paris, on my plighted faith,
 I flatter'd my fond hope, with vain resolves,
 To guide the lovely Zara to that court,
 Where Lewis has establish'd virtue's throne;—
 But Osman will detain her—yet, not Osman;
 Zara, herself, forgets she is a christian,
 And loves the tyrant sultan!—Let that pass:
 I mourn a disappointment, still, more cruel;
 The prop of all our christian hope is lost!

Chat. Dispose me, at your will—I am your own.

Neres. Oh, sir, great Lusignan, so long their captive,
 That last of an heroic race of kings!
 That warrior! whose past fame has fill'd the world!
 Osman refuses, to my sighs, for ever!

Chat. Nay, then, we have been all redeem'd in vain;
 Perish, that soldier, who would quit his chains,
 And leave his noble chief, behind, in fetters.
 Alas! you know him not, as I have known him;
 Thank heav'n, that plac'd your birth so far remov'd.
 From those detested days of blood, and woe;
 But I, less happy, was condemn'd to see
 Thy walls, Jerusalem, beat down—and all
 Our pious fathers' labours lost, in ruins!
 Heav'n! had you seen the very temple rifled!
 The sacred sepulchre, itself, profan'd!
 Fathers with children, mingled, flame together!
 And our last king, oppress'd with age and arms,
 Murder'd—and bleeding, o'er his murder'd sons!
 Then, Lusignan, sole remnant of his race,
 Rallying our fated few, amidst the flames,
 Fearless, beneath the crush of falling towers,
 The conquerors and the conquer'd, groans and death!
 Dreadful—and, waving in his hand his sword,
 Red with the blood of infidels—cry'd out,
 This way, ye faithful christians! follow me—

B. 2.

Neres.

Neres. How full of glory was that brave retreat!

Chat. 'Twas heav'n, no doubt, that sav'd, and led him on;

Pointed his path; and march'd our guardian guide:

We reach'd Cæsarea—there, the general voice

Chose Lusignan, thenceforth, to give us laws;

Alas! 'twas vain—Cæsarea cou'd not stand,

When Sion's self was fallen!—we were betray'd;

And Lusignan condemn'd, to length of life,

In chains, in damps, and darkness, and despair:

Yet, great, amidst his miseries, he look'd,

As if he could not feel his fate, himself,

But as it reach'd his followers.—And shall we,

For whom our gen'rous leader suffer'd this,

Be, vilely, safe? and dare be bless'd without him?

Neres. Oh! I shou'd hate the liberty he shar'd not;

I knew, too well, the miseries you describe,

For I was born amidst 'em—Chains, and death,

Cæsarea lost, and Saracens triumphant,

Were the first objects which my eyes e'er look'd on.

Hurried, an infant, among o'her infants,

Snatch'd from the bosoms of their bleeding mothers,

A temple sav'd us, till the slaughter ceas'd;

Then were we sent to this ill-fated city,

Here, in the palace of our former kings,

To learn from Saracens, their hated faith,

And be completely wretched.—Zara, too,

Shar'd this captivity; we, both, grew up,

So near each other, that a tender friendship

Endear'd her to my wishes:—My fond heart—

Pardon its weakness! bleeds, to see her lost,

And, for a barb'rous tyrant, quit her God!

Chat. Such is the Saracens', too fatal, policy!

Watchful seducers, still, of infant weakness:

Happy, that you, so young, escap'd their hands!

But, let us think—May not this Zara's int'rest,

Loving the Sultan, and by him belov'd,

For Lusignan procure some softer sentence?

The wise, and just, with innocence, may draw

Their own advantage, from the guilt of others.

Neres. How shall I gain admission to her presence?

Osman has banish'd me—but that's a trifle;

Will the seraglio's portals open to me?

Or, cou'd I find that, easy, to my hopes,

What prospect of success, from an apostate?

On whom I cannot look, without disdain;

And

And who will read her shame upon my brow?
The hardest trial of a gen'rous mind
Is, to court favours, from a hand it scorns.

Chat. Think, it is Lusignan we seek to serve:

Neres. Well--it shall be attempted--Hark! who's this?
Are my eyes false? or, is it, really, she?

Enter Zara.

Za. Start not, my worthy friend! I come to seek
you:

The Sultan has permitted it; fear nothing:—
But, to confirm my heart, which trembles, near you,
Soften that angry air, nor look reproach;
Why should we fear each other, both, mistaking?
Associates, from our birth, one prison held us,
One friendship taught affliction, to be eadn;
Till heav'n thought fit to favour your escape,
And call you to the fields of happier France;
Thence, once again, it was my lot to find you,
A pris'ner here: where, hid, amongst a crowd
Of undistinguish'd slaves, with less restraint,
I shar'd your frequent converse:—
It pleas'd your pity, shall I say your friendship?
Or, rather, shall I call it generous charity?
To form that noble purpose, to redeem
Distressful Zara—you procur'd my ransom,
And, with a greatness that out shou'd a crown,
Return'd, yourself a slave, to give me freedom!
But heaven has cast our fate, for different climes;
Here, in Jerusalem, I fix for ever:
Yet, among all the shine, that marks my fortune,
I shall, with frequent tears, remember yours:
Your goodness will, forever, sooth my heart,
And keep your image, still, adweller, there
Warm'd, by your great example, to protect
That faith, that lifts humanity so high,
I'll be a mother to distressful christians.

Neres. How!—You protect the christians! you,
who can

* Abjure their saving truth!—and, coldly, see
Great Lusignan, their chief, die slow, in chains?

Za. To bring him freedom, you behold me here,
You will, this moment, meet his eyes, in joy.

Chat. Shall I, then, live, to bless that happy hour?

Neres. Can christians owe so dear a gift to Zara?

Za. Hopeless, I gather'd courage, to intreat
The Sultan, for his liberty—amaz'd,
So soon, to gain the happiness, I wish'd!
See! where they bring the good, old chief, grown dim-
With age, by pain, and sorrows, hasten'd on!

Chat. How is my heart dissolv'd, with sudden joy!

Za. I long to view his venerable face,
But tears, I know not why, eclipse my sight!
I feel, methinks, redoubled pity for him;
But I, alas! myself, have been a slave:
And, when we pity woes, which we have felt,
'Tis but a partial virtue!

Neref. Amazement!—Whence this greatness, in an
infidel!

Enter Lusignan, led in by two guards.

Lusig. Where am I! what forgiving angel's voice
Has call'd me, to revisit long-lost day?

Am I with christians?—I am weak—forgive me,
And guide my trembling steps.—I'm full of years,
Yet, misery has worn me, more than age.

[*Seating himself.*] Am I, in truth, at liberty?

Chat. You are;

And every christian's grief takes end, with yours,

Lusig. O, light!—O! clearer, far, than light! that
voice!

Chatillon! is it you?—my fellow martyr!
And, shall our wretchedness, indeed, have end?

In what place are we now?—my feeble eyes,
Disus'd to day-light, long, in vain, to find you.

Chat. This was the palace of your royal fathers,
'Tis, now, the son of Noradin's seraglio.

Za. The master of this place—the mighty Osman!
Distinguishes, and loves to cherish virtue;

This gen'rous Frenchman, yet, a stranger to you,
Drawn from his native soil, from peace, and rest,
Brought the vow'd ransoms of ten christian slaves,
Himself, contented, to remain a captive:

But Osman, charm'd by greatness, like his own,
To equal what he lov'd, has giv'n him you.

Lusig. So, gen'rous France inspires her social sons!
They have been, ever, dear, and useful to me!
Wou'd I were nearer to him—Noble sir!

[*Nerestan approaches.*

How have I merited, that you, for me,
Shou'd pass such distant seas, to bring me blessings,

And

And hazard your own safety, for my sake?

Nerej. My name, sir, is Nerestan---born, in Syria,
I wore the chains of slavery, from my birth;
Till, quitting the proud crescent, for the court,
Where warlike Lewis reigns, beneath his eye,
I learnt the trade of arms:---the rank I hold,
Was but the kind distinction which he gave me,
To tempt my courage, to deserve regard.

Your sight, unhappy prince, would charm his eye;
That best, and greatest monarch, will behold,
With grief, and joy, those venerable wounds,
And print embraces, where your fetters bound you:
All Paris will revere the cross's martyr;
Paris, the refuge, still, of ruin'd kings!

Lusig. Alas! in times, long past, I've seen its glory:
When Philip, the victorious, liv'd---I fought,
Abreast, with Montmorency, and M-lun,
D'Estaing, De Neile, and the far-famous Courcy;----
Names, which were, then, the praise, and dread, of war!
But, what have I to do, at Paris, now?

I stand upon the brink of the cold grave;
That way, my journey lies---to find, I hope,
The king of kings, and move remembrance, there,
Of all my wees, long-suffer'd, for his sake.----
You, gen'rous witnesses of my last hour,
While I yet live, assist my humble prayers,
And join the resignation of my soul.

Nerestan! Chatillon! and you---fair mourner!
Whose tears do honour to an old man's sorrows!
Pity a father, the unhappiest, sure,
That ever felt the hand of angry heav'n!

My eyes, tho' dying, still, can furnish tears:
Half my long life they flow'd, and, still, will flow!
A daughter, and three sons, my heart's proud hopes,
Were, all, torn from me, in their tend'rest years;
My friend Chatillon knows, and can remember---
Chat. Wou'd I were able, to forget your wee.

Lusig. Thou wert a pris'ner, with me, in Casarea,
And, there, beheld'st my wife, and two dear sons,
Perish, in flames---they did not need the grave,
Their foes wou'd have deny'd 'em!---I beheld it:
Husband! and father! helpless, I beheld it!
Deny'd the mournful privilege to die!

If ye are saints in heaven, as, sure, ye are!
Look, with an eye of pity, on that brother,
That sister, whom you lent!--If I have, yet,.

Or son, or daughter :-- for, in early chains,
Far from their lost, and unassisting father,
I heard, that they were sent, with numbers more,
To this seraglio; hence to be dispers'd,
In nameless remnants, o'er the east, and spread
Our christian miseries, round a faithless world.

Gl. t. 'Twas true---for, in the horrors of that day,
I snatch'd your infant daughter from her cradle;
But, finding ev'ry hope of sight was vain,
Scarce had I sprinkled, from a public fountain,
Those sacred drops, which wash the soul from sin;
When, from my bleeding arms, fierce Saracens
Forc'd the lost innocent, who, smiling, lay,
And pointed, playful, at the swatthy spoilers!
With her, your youngest, then, your only son,
Whose little life had reach'd the fourth, sad year,
And, just, giv'n sense, to feel his own misfortunes,
Was order'd to this city.

Nerej. I, too, hither,
Just, at that fatal age, from lost Cæsarea,
Came, in that crowd of undistinguish'd christians.---

Lusig. You?--Came you thence?---Alas! who knows.
but you

Might, heretofore, have seen my two, poor children?
[*Looking up.*] Ha! madam! that small ornament you
wear,

Its form a stranger to this country's fashion,
How long has it been your's?

Za. From my first birth, fir---

Ah! what! you seem surpriz'd!---Why should this
move you?

Lusig. Would you confide it to my trembling hands?

Za. To what new wonder am I now reserv'd?

Oh! fir, what mean you?

Lusig. Providence! and heaven!

O, failing eyes! deceive you not my hope?

Can this be possible? --Yes, yes---'tis she!

This little cross-----I know it, by sure marks;

Oh! take me heav'n! while I can dye with joy---

Za. O! do not, fir, distract me!--rising thoughts,
And hopes, and fears, o'erwhelm me!

Lusig. Tell me, yet,

Has it remain'd, for ever, in your hands?

What! --Both brought captives, from Cæsarea hither?

Za. Both, both.---

Nerej. Oh, heaven! have I then found a father?

Lusig.

Lusig. Their voice! their looks!

The living images of their dear mother!

O, thou! who, thus, canst bless my life's last sand!

Strengthen my heart, too feeble for this joy.

Madam! Nerestan!--Help me, Chatillon! [*Rising.*]

Nerestan! if thou ought'st to own that name,

Shines there upon thy breast, a noble scar,

Which, ere Casarea fell, from a fierce hand,

Surprising us, by night, my child receiv'd?

Neref. Bless'd hand!--I bear it, fir---the mark is there!

Lusig. Merciful heaven!

Neref. [*Kneeling.*] O, fir!--O, Zara, kneel---

Za. [*Kneeling.*] My father!--Oh!--

Lusig. O, my lost children!

Both. Oh!-----

[ing you,

Lusig. My son! my daughter! lost, in embrace
I would now die, lest this shou'd prove a dream.

Chat. How touch'd is my glad heart, to see their joy!

Lusig. Again, I find you---dear, in wretchedness:

O, my brave son---and, thou, my nameless daughter!

Now, dissipate all doubt, remove all dread:

Has heaven, that gives me back my children--giv'n 'em,

Such as I lost 'em?---Come they, christians, to me?---

One weeps--and one declines a conscious eye!

Your silence speaks---too well I understand it.

Za. I cannot, fir, deceive you---Osman's laws

Were mine---and Osman is not christian---

Lusig. Oh! my misguided child!--at that sad word,

The little life, yet mine, had left me, quite,

But that my death might fix thee, lost, for ever.

Full sixty years, I fought the christians' cause,

Saw their doom'd temple fall, their power destroy'd:

Twenty, a captive, in a dungeon's depth,

Yet, never, for myself, my tears sought heaven;

All for my children rose my fruitless prayers:

Yet, what avails a father's wretched joy?

I have a daughter gain'd, and heav'n an enemy.

But, 'tis my guilt, not her's---thy father's prison

Depriv'd thee of thy faith--yet, do not lose it!--

Reclaim thy birthright--think up in the blood

Of twenty christian kings, that fills thy veins;

'Tis heroes' blood---the blood of aints, and martyrs!

What wou'd thy mother feel, to see thee, thus?

She, and thy murder'd brothers!--think, they call thee;

Think, that thou see'st 'em, stretch their bloody arms,

And

And weep, to win thee, from their murd'ers' bosom.
 Ev'n, in the place, where thou betray'st thy God,
 He dy'd, my child, to save thee --- Turn thy eyes;
 And see; for thou art near, his sacred sepulchre;
 Thou can'st not move a step but where he trod!
 Thou tremblest---Oh! admit me to thy soul;
 Kill not thy aged, thy afflicted father;
 Take not, thus soon, again, the life thou gav'st him;
 Shame not thy mother---nor betray thy God.---
 'Tis past---Repentance dawns, in thy sweet eyes;
 I see bright truth, descending to thy heart,
 And now, my long-lost child, is found, for ever.

Neref. O! doubly blest! a sister, and a soul,
 To be redeem'd, together!

Za. O! my father!

Dear author of my life! inform me, teach me,
 What shou'd my duty do?

Lusig. By one short word,
 To dry up all my tears, and make life welcome,
 Say, thou art christian---

Za. Sir---I am a christian.

[for it.

Lusig. Receive her gracious heaven! and bless her,

Enter Orasmin.

Oras. Madam, the Sultan order'd me, to tell you,
 That he expects, you, instant, quit this place,
 And bid your last farewell, to these vile christians:
 You, captive Frenchmen, follow me;---for you,
 It is my task to answer---

Chat. Still, new miseries!

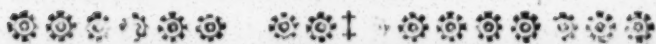
How cautious man shou'd be, to say, I'm happy!

Lusig. These are the times, when men of virtue prove,
 That 'tis the mind, not blood, insures their firmness.

Za. Alas! Sir---Oh!--

Lusig. O, you!--I dare not name you:
 Farewell---but, come what may, be sure, remember,
 You keep the fatal secret!--for the rest,
 Leave all to heaven,---be faithful, and be blest.

End of the SECOND ACT.



ACT III. SCENE I.

Osmin, and Orasmin.

Of. ORASMIN! this alarm was false, and groundless;
 Lewis, no longer, turns his arms, on me:

The

The French, grown weary, by a length of woes,
 Wish not, at once, to quit their fruitful plains,
 And famish, on Arabia's desert sands.
 Their ships, 'tis true, have spread the Syrian seas;
 And Lewis hovering, o'er the coast of Cyprus,
 Alarms the tears of Asia;---But, I've learnt,
 That, steering wide, from our unmenac'd ports,
 He points his thunder, at the Egyptian shore.
 There, let him war, and waste my enemies;
 Their mutual conflict will but fix my throne.---
 Release those christians---I restore their freedom;
 'Twill please their master, nor can weaken me:
 Transport 'em, at my cost, to find their king:
 I wish, to have him know me: carry thither
 This Lusignan, whom, tell him, I restore,
 Because I cannot tear his fame in arms;
 But love him, for his virtue, and his blood.
 Tell him, my father having conquer'd, twice,
 Condemn'd him to perpetual chains; but I
 Have set him free, that I might triumph more.

Ors. The christians gain an army, in his name.

Of. I cannot fear a sound.---

Ors. But, Sir,---shou'd Lewis-----

Of. Tell Lewis, and the world---it shall be so:

Zara propos'd it, and my heart approves:
 Thy statesman's reason is too dull, for love!
 Why wilt thou force me, to confess it all?
 'I ho' I, to Lewis, send back Lusignan,
 I give him but to Zara---I have griev'd her;
 And ow'd her the attonement of this joy.
 Thy false advices, which, but now, mist
 My anger, to confine those helpless christians,
 Gave her a pain, I feel, for her and me:
 But I talk on, and waste the smiling moments.
 For one long hour, I yet, defer my nuptials;
 But 'tis not lost, that hour! 'twill all be her's!
 She wou'd employ it, in a conference,
 With that Nerestan, whom thou know'st---that christian!

Ors. And have you, sir, indulg'd that strange desire?

Of. What mean'st thou? they were infant slaves
 together;

Friends should part, kind, who are to meet no more;
 When Zara asks, I will refuse her nothing.
 Restraint was never made for those, we love;
 Down with these rigours, of the proud seraglio;
 I hate its laws -- where blind austerity

Sinks

Sinks virtue, to necessity,---My blood
 Disclaims your Asian jealousy;---I hold
 The fierce, free, plainness, of my Scythian ancestors,
 Their open confidence, their honest hate,
 Their love, unfeeling, and their anger, told.
 Go---the good christian waits---conduct him to her;
 Zara expects thee--What she wills, obey. [*Exit Osman.*]

Oraf. Ho! christian! enter--wait, a moment, here;

Enter Nerestan.

Zara will soon approach---I go, to find her.

Exit Orafinin.

Neref. In what a state, in what a place, I leave her!
 O faith! O, father! O! my poor, lost sister!
 She's here!-----

Enter Zara.

Thank heaven, it is not, then, unlawful,
 To see you, yet, once more, my lovely sister!
 Not all so happy!---We, who met, but now,
 Shall never meet again-- for Lusignan---
 We shall be orphans, still, and want a father.

Za. Forbid it, heaven!

Neref. His last, sad hour's at hand.-----

That flow of joy, which follow'd our discovery,
 Too strong, and sudden, for his age's weakness,
 Wasting his spirits, dry'd the source of life,
 And nature yields him up, to time's demand:
 Shall he not die, in peace?---Oh! let no doubt
 Disturb his parting moments, with distrust;
 Let me, when I return, to close his eyes,
 Compose his mind's impatience, too, and tell him,
 You are confirm'd a christian.-----

Za. Oh! may his soul enjoy, in earth, and heaven,
 Eternal rest! nor let one thought, one sigh,
 One bold complaint, of mine, recall his cares!
 But, you have injur'd me, who, still, can doubt.---
 What! am I not your sister? and shall you
 Refuse me credit? you suppose me light?
 You, who should judge my honour, by your own!
 Shall you distrust a truth, I dar'd avow,
 And stamp apostate, on a sister's heart!

Neref. Ah! do not misconceive me! --if I err'd,
 Affection, not distrust, misled my fear;
 Your will may be a christian, yet, not you;
 There is a sacred mark---a sign, of faith,
 A pledge, of promise, that must firm your claim;

Wash

Wash you from guilt, and open heaven before you.
Swear, swear, by all the woes, we all have borne,
By all the martyr'd saints, who call you daughter;
That you consent, this day, to seal our faith,
By that mysterious rite, which waits your call.

Za. I swear, by heaven, and all its holy host,
Its saints, its martyrs, its attesting angels,
And the dread presence of its living author,
To have no faith, but yours;—to die a christian!
Now, tell me, what this mystic faith requires?

Neres. To hate the happiness of Osman's throne,
And love that god, who, thro' his maze of woes,
Has brought us all, unhoping, thus, together;
For me—I am a soldier, uninstructed,
Ner daring to instruct, tho' strong in faith:
But I will bring th' ambassador of heaven,
To clear your views, and lift you to your god:
Be it your task, to gain admission for him.—
But where? from whom?—Oh! thou immortal power!
Whence can we hope it, in this curs'd seraglio?
Who is this slave of Osman?—yes, this slave!
Does she not boast the blood of twenty kings?
Is not her race the same with that of Lewis?
Is she not Lusignan's unhappy daughter?
A christian? and my sister?—yet, a slave!
A willing slave!—I dare not speak, more plainly.

Za. Cruel! go on—Alas! you know not me!
At once, a stranger, to my secret fate,
My pains, my tears, my wishes, and my power:
I am—I will be, christian—will receive
This holy priest, with his mysterious blessing;
I will not do, nor suffer, aught, unworthy
Myself, my father, or my father's race.—
But, tell me—nor be tender, on this point;
What punishment your christian laws decree,
For an unhappy wretch, who, to herself,
Unknown, and, all abandon'd by the world,
Lost, and enslav'd, has, in her sov'reign master,
Found a protector, generous, as great,
Has touch'd his heart, and giv'n him, all her own?

Neres. The punishment of such a slave, shou'd be
Death, in this world—and pain, in that to come.

Za. I am that slave—strike here—and save my shame.

Neres. Destruction to my hopes!—Can it be you?

Za. It is—ador'd by Osman, I adore him:

C

This

This hour, the nuptial rites will make us, one.

Neref. What! marry Osman?—Let the world grow dark,*

That the extinguish'd sun may hide thy shame!

Could it be thus, it were no crime to kill thee.

Za. Strike, strike—I love him—yes, by heav'n! I love him.

Neref. Death is thy due—but not thy due from me:

Yet, were the honour of our house no bar—

My father's fame, and the too gentle laws

Of that religion, which thou hast disgrac'd—

Did not the God, thou quist, hold back my arm,

Not there—I could not there;—but, by my soul,

I would rush, desperate, to the Sultan's breast,

And plunge my sword in his proud heart who damns thee.

O! shame! shame! shame! at such a time, as this!

When Lewis, that awak'ner of the world,

Beneath the lifted cross, makes Egypt pale,

And draws the sword of heaven, to spread our faith!

Now, to submit to see my sister, doom'd

A bosom slave, to him, whose tyrant heart

But measures glory, by the christian's woe;

Yes—I will dare acquaint our father with it;

Departing Lusignan may live so long,

As just, to hear thy shame, and die, to 'scape it.

Za. Stay—my too angry brother—stay—perhaps, Zara has resolution, great as thine:

'Tis cruel—and unkind!—Thy words are crimes;

My weakness but misfortune! Dost thou suffer?

I suffer more;—Oh! would to heaven, this blood

Of twenty boasted kings, would stop, at once,

And stagnate in my heart!—It, then, no more

Would rush, in boiling fevers, thro' my veins,

And ev'ry trembling drop be fill'd with Osman.

How has he lov'd me! how has he oblig'd me!

I owe thee to him! what has he not done,

To justify his boundless pow'r of charming!

For me, he softens the severe decrees

Of his own faith;—and is it just that mine

Should bid me hate him, but because he loves me?

No—I will be a christian—but preserve

My gratitude as sacred as my faith:

If I have death to fear, for Osman's sake,

It must be from his coldness, not his love.

Neref. I must, at once, condemn and pity thee!

I can-

I cannot point thee out, which way to go,
 But providence will lend its light to guide thee.
 That sacred rite, which thou shalt, now, receive,
 Will strengthen and support thy feeble heart,
 To live, an innocent; or die, a martyr.
 Here, then, begin performance of thy vow;
 Here, in the trembling horrors of thy soul,
 Promise thy king, thy father, and thy god,
 Not to accomplish these detested nuptials,
 Till, first, the rev'rend priest has clear'd your eyes,
 Taught you to know, and giv'n you claim to heav'n.
 Promise me this—

Za. So bless me, heaven! I do.—

Go—hasten the good priest, I will expect him:
 But, first, return—cheer my expiring father,
 Tell him, I am, and will be, all he wishes me:
 Tell him, to give him life, 'twere joy to die.

Neres. I go—farewell—farewell, unhappy sister!

Exit Nerestan.

Za. I am alone—and, now, be just, my heart!
 And tell me, wilt thou dare betray thy God!
 What am I? what am I about to be?
 Daughter of Lusignan?—or wife to Osman?
 Am I a lover, most? or, most, a christian?
 Would Selima were come! and, yet, 'tis just,
 All friends shou'd fly her, who forsakes herself:
 What shall I do?—What heart has strength to bear
 These double weights of duty?—help me, heaven!
 To thy hard laws I render up my soul:
 But, oh! demand it back—for, now, 'tis Osman's.—

Enter Osman.

Os. Shine out, appear, be found, my lovely Zara!
 Impatient eyes attend—the rites expect thee;
 And my devoted heart, no longer, brooks
 This distance from its soft'ner!—all the lamps
 Of nuptial love are lighted, and burn pure,
 As if they drew their brightness from thy blushes;
 The holy mosque is fill'd with fragrant fumes,
 Which emulate the sweetness of thy breathing:
 My prostrate people, all, confirm my choice,
 And send their souls to heaven, in prayer, for blessings.
 Thy envious rivals, conscious of thy right,
 Approve superior charms, and join to praise thee;
 The throne, that waits thee, seems to shine more
 richly,

As all its gems, with animated lustre,
 heard to look dim, beneath the eyes of Zara!
 Come, my slow love! the ceremonies wait thee;
 Come, and begin, from this dear hour, my triumph.

Za. Oh! what a wretch am I? O, grief! Oh!
 love!

Of. Come—come—

Za. Where shall I hide my blushes?

Of. Blushes?—here, in my bosom hide 'em.—

Za. My Lord!

Of. Nay, Zara—give me thy hand, and come—

Za. Instruct me, heaven!

What I should say—Alas! I cannot speak.

Of. Away—this modest, sweet, reluctant, trifling
 But doubles my desires, and thy own beauties!

Za. Ah, me!

Of. Nay—but thou should'st not be too cruel—

Za. I can, no longer, bear it—Oh! my lord—

Of. Ha!—what!—whence?—how?—

Za. My lord! my sov'reign!

Heaven knows this marriage wou'd have been a bliss,

Above my humble hopes!—yet, witness love!

Not from the grandeur of your throne, that bliss,

But, from the pride of calling Osman, mine.

Wou'd, you had been no emperor! and I,

Possess'd of power, and charms, deserving you!

That slighting Asia's thrones, I might, alone,

Have left a proffer'd world, to follow you,

Through deserts, uninhabited by men,

And bless'd, with ample room, for peace, and love:

But, as it is—these christians—

Of. Christians! what!

How fast two images into thy thoughts,

So distant—as the christians, and my love!

Za. That good, old christian, rev'rend Lufignan,

Now, dying, ends his life, and woes, together!

Of. Well! let him die—What hast thy heart to feel,

Thus pressing, and thus tender, from the death

Of an old, wretched christian?—Thank our prophet,

'Thou art no christian!—educated, here,

Thy happy youth was taught our better faith:

Sweet, as thy pity thines, 'tis, now, mis-tim'd;

What! tho' an aged sufferer dies, unhappy,

Why shou'd his foreign fate disturb our joys?

Za. Sir, if you love me, and wou'd have me think,

That I am truly dear—

Of.

Of. Heaven! if I love—

Za. Permit me—

Of. What?

Za. To desire—

Of. Speak out—

Za. The nuptial rites

May be deferr'd, till—

Of. What?—Is that the voice

Of Zara?

Za. Oh! I cannot bear his frown!

Of. Of Zara!

Za. It is dreadful to my heart,

To give you but a seeming cause, for anger;

Pardon my grief—Alas! I cannot bear it;

There is a painful terror in your eye,

That pierces to my soul—hid, from your sight;

I go, to make a moment's truce, with tears,

And gather force, to speak of my despair.

[Exit disordered.]

Of. I stand immoveable, like senseless marble!

Horror had frozen my suspended tongue:

And an astonish'd silence robb'd my will

Of power, to tell her, that the shock'd my soul!

Spoke she to me?—sure, I misunderstood her!

Could it be me, she left?—What have I seen!

Enter Orafmin.

Orafmin! What a change is here!—She's gone,

And I permitted it, I know not how!

Oraf. Perhaps, you but accuse the charming fault

Of innocence, too modest, oft, in love.

Of. But why, and whence, those tears?—those
looks! that sight!

That grief! so strongly stamp'd on every feature!

If it has been that Frenchman!—What a thought!

How low, how horrid, a suspicion, that!

The dreadful flash, at once, gives light, and kills me;

My too bold confidence, repell'd my caution;

An infidel!—a slave!—a heart, like mine,

Reduc'd, to suffer, from so vile a rival!

But, tell me, did'st thou mark 'em, at their parting?

Did'st thou observe the language of their eyes?

Hide nothing from me—Is my love betray'd?

Tell me my whole disgrace: nay, if thou tremblest,

I hear thy pity speak, though thou art silent.

Oraf. I tremble at the pangs, I see you suffer;

Let not your angry apprehension urge
Your faithful slave, to irritate your anguish;
I did, 'tis true, observe some parting tears;
But, there are tears, of charity, and grief:
I cannot think, there was a cause, deserving
This agony of passion ----

Os. Why, no—I thank thee-----

Orafin, thou art wise! It cou'd not be,
That I shou'd stand expos'd to such an insult:
Thou know'st, had Zara meant me the offence,
She wants not wisdom, to have hid it, better;
How rightly did'st thou judge!—Zara shall know it:
And thank thy honest service---After all,
Might she not have some cause for tears, which I
Claim no concern in—but the grief it gives her?
What an unlikely fear—from a poor slave!
Who goes, to-morrow, and, no doubt, who wishes,
Nay, who resolves to see these climes no more!

Oraf. Why did you, sir, against our country's custom,

Indulge him, with a second leave to come?
He said, he shou'd return, once more, to see her.

Os. Return! the traitor! he return!--Dares he
Presume, to press a second interview?
Wou'd he be seen again?—He shall be seen;
But dead.—I'll punish the audacious slave,
To teach the faithless fair, to feel my anger:
Be still, my transports; violence is blind:
I know, my heart, at once, is fierce and weak;
I feel, that I descend, below myself;
Zara can never justly be suspected;
Her sweetness was not form'd to cover treason:
Yet, Osman must not stoop to woman's follies.
Their tears, complaints, regrets, and reconcilements,
With all their light, capricious, roll of changes,
Are arts, too vulgar, to be try'd on me.
It wou'd become me, better, to resume
The empire of my will:--Rather than fall
Beneath myself, I must, how dear so'er
It costs me, rise—till I look down on Zara!
Away—but mark me--these scraglio doors
Against all Christians, be they, henceforth, shut,
Close, as the dark retreats of silent death ---
What have I done, just heav'n! thy rage to move,
That thou shou'd'st sink me down, so low, to love?

End of the THIRD ACT.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Zara, Selima.

Selima.

AH! madam, how, at once, I grieve your fate,
 And, how admire your virtue!--Heaven permits,
 And heaven will give you strength, to bear misfortune;
 To break these chains, so strong, and, yet, so dear.

Za. Oh! that I could support the fatal struggle!

Sel. Th' eternal aids your weakness, sees your will;
 Directs your purpose, and rewards your sorrows.

Za. Never had wretch more cause, to hope, he does.

Sel. What! tho' you here, no more, behold your
 father!

There is a father to be found, above,
 Who can restore that father to his daughter.

Za. But I have planted pain, in Osmán's bosom:
 He loves me, ev'n to death!--and I reward him,
 With anguish, and despair!--How base; how cruel!
 But I deserv'd him not, I shou'd have been
 Too happy, and the hand of heaven repell'd me.

Sel. What! will you then, regret the glorious loss,
 And hazard, thus, a vict'ry, bravely won?

Za. Inhuman victory!--Thou dost not know,
 This love, so pow'rful, this sole joy of life,
 This first, best hope of earthly happiness,
 Is, yet, less pow'rful, in my heart, than heaven!
 To him, who made that heart, I offer it:
 There, there, I sacrifice my bleeding passion:
 I pour, before him, ev'ry guilty tear;
 I beg him, to efface the fond impression,
 And fill with his own image, all my soul;
 But, while I weep, and sigh, repent, and pray,
 Remembrance brings the object of my love,
 And ev'ry light illusion floats before him.
 I see, I hear him, and, again, he charms!
 Fills my glad soul, and flames, 'twixt me, and heav'n!
 Oh! all ye royal ancestors! Oh, father!
 Mother! you christians, and the christians' God!
 You, who deprive me of this generous lover!

If

If you permit me not to live for him,
 Let me not live at all, and I am blest'd:
 Let me die, innocent; let his dear hand
 Close the sad eyes of her, he stoop'd to love,
 And I acquit my fate, and ask no more.
 But he forgives me not---regardless, now,
 Whether, or how, I live, or, when I die.
 He quits me, scorns me---and I yet live on,
 And talk of death, as distant.----

Sel. Ah! despair not,

Trust your eternal helper, and be happy.

Za. Why---what has Osman done, that he, too,
 shou'd not?

Has heaven, so nobly, form'd his heart, to hate it?
 Gen'rous, and just, beneficent, and brave,
 Were he but christian---What can man be more?
 I wish, methinks, this reverend priest were come,
 To free me from these doubts, which shake my soul:
 Yet, know not, why I should not dare to hope,
 That heav'n, whose mercy all confess, and feel,
 Will pardon, and approve, the alliance wish'd:
 Perhaps, it seats me on the throne of Syria,
 To tax my pow'r, for these good christians' comfort:
 Thou know'st the mighty Saladine, who, first,
 Conquer'd this empire, from my father's race,
 Who, like my Osman, charm'd th' admiring world,
 Drew breath, tho' Syrian, from a christian mother.

Sel. What mean you, madam! Ah! you do not
 see-----

Za. Yes, yes---I see it all; I am not blind:
 I see my country, and my race, condemn me;
 I see, that, spite of all, I still love Osman.
 What! if I, now, go throw me at his feet,
 And tell him, there, sincerely, what I am.

Sel. Consider--- that might cost your brother's life,
 Expose the christians, and betray you all.

Za. You do not know the noble heart of Osman.

Sel. I know him the protector of a faith,
 Sworn enemy to ours;---The more he loves,
 The less will he permit you, to profess
 Opinions, which he hates: to-night, the priest,
 In private, introduc'd, attends you, here;
 You promis'd him admission----

Za. Wou'd I had not!

I promis'd, too, to keep this fatal secret;
 My father's urg'd command requir'd it, twice;

I must

I must obey, all dangerous, as it is:
Compell'd to silence, Osman is enrag'd,
Suspicion follows, and I lose his love.

Enter Osman.

Of. Madam! there was a time, when my charm'd
heart

Made it a virtue, to be lost, in love;
When, without blushing, I indulg'd my flame;
And ev'ry day, still, made you dearer to me.
You taught me, madam, to believe, my love
Rewarded, and return'd—nor was that hope,
Methinks, too bold for reason: emperors,
Who chuse to sigh, devoted, at the feet
Of beauties, whom the world conceive their slaves,
Have fortune's claim, at least, to sure success:
But, 'twere prophane to think of pow'r, in love.
Dear, as my passion makes you, I decline
Possession of her charms, whose heart's another's;
You will not find me a weak, jealous, lover,
By coarse reproaches giving pain to you,
And shaming my own greatness—wounded deeply,
Yet shunning, and disdaining, low complaint,
I come—to tell you—

Za. Give my trembling heart
A moment's respite—

Of. That unwilling coldness
Is the just prize of your capricious lightness;
Your ready arts may spare the fruitless pains,
Of colouring deceit with fair pretences;
I would not wish to hear your slight excuses;
I cherish ignorance, to save my blushes.
Osman, in ev'ry trial, shall remember,
That he is emperor—Whate'er I suffer,
'Tis due to honour, that I give up you,
And, to my injur'd bosom, take despair,
Rather than, shamefully, possess you, sighing,
Convinc'd, those sighs were, never, meant for me—
Go, madam—you are free—from Osman's pow'r—
Expect no wrongs, but see his face no more.

Za. At last, 'tis come—the fear'd, the murdering
moment
Is come—and I am curs'd by earth and heaven!

[Throws herself on the ground,

If

If it is true, that I am lov'd no more;—
If you—

Of. It is too true, my fame requires it;
It is too true, that I, unwilling, leave you:
That I, at once, renounce you, and adore—
Zara!—you weep!

Za. If I am doom'd to lose you,
If I must wander o'er an empty world,
Unloving, and unlov'd—Oh! yet, do justice
To the afflicted—do not wrong me doubly:
Punish me, if 'tis needful to your peace,
But say not, I deserv'd it—This, at least,
Believe—for, not the greatness of your soul
Is truth, more pure, and sacred---no regret
Can touch my bleeding heart, for I have lost
The rank, of her, you raise to share your throne:
I know, I never ought to have been there;
My fate, and my defects require, I lose you:
But ah! my heart was, never, known to Osman.
May heaven, that punishes, for ever hate me,
If I regret the loss of aught, but you.

Of. Rise---rise---This means not love!

[*Raises her:*

Za. Strike-----Strike me, heaven!

Of. What! is it love, to force yourself to wound
The heart, you wish to gladden?—But I find,
Lovers least know themselves; for, I believ'd,
That I had taken back the power I gave you;
Yet, see!—you did but weep, and have resum'd me!
Proud, as I am—I must confess, one wish
Evades my power---the blessing to forget you.
Zara---Thy tears were form'd to teach disdain,
That softness can disarm it.—'Tis decreed,
I must, for ever, love---but, from what cause,
If thy consenting heart partakes my fires,
Art thou reluctant to a blessing, meant me?
Speak! is it levity---or, is it fear?
Fear of a power, that, but for blessing thee,
Had, without joy, been painful---Is it artifice?
Oh! spare the needless pains---Art was not made
For Zara;---Art, however innocent,
Looks like deceiving---I abhor'd it ever.

Za. Alas! I have no art, not ev'n enough,
To hide this love, and this distress, you give me.

Of. New riddles! Speak with plainness to my soul;
What can'st thou mean?

Za.

Za. I have no power to speak it.

Of. Is it some secret, dangerous to my state?
Is it some christian plot, grown ripe against me?

Za. Lives there a wretch, so vile, as to betray you!
Osman is blest'd, beyond the reach of fear;
Fears, and misfortunes, threaten only Zara.

Of. Why threaten Zara?

Za. Permit me, at your feet,
Thus, trembling, to beseech a favour from you.

Of. A favour!--Oh; you guide the will of Osman.

Za. Ah! wou'd to heaven, our duties were united,
Firm, as our thoughts and wishes!--But this day,
But this one sad, unhappy day, permit me,
Alone, and far-divided, from your eye,
To cover my distress; lest you, too tender,
Shou'd see, and share it with me--from to-morrow,
I will not have a thought, conceal'd from you.

Of. What strange disquiet! from what stranger
cause?

Za. If I am, really, blest'd with Osman's love,
He will not, then, refuse this humble prayer.

Of. If it must be, it must.--Be pleas'd---my will
Takes purpose, from your wishes;---and, consent
Depends not on my choice, but your decree:
Go---but remember, how he loves, who thus,
Finds a delight in pain, because you give it.

Za. It gives me more than pain, to make you feel it.

Of. And---can you, Zara, leave me?

Za. Alas! my lord!

[Exit Zara.]

Of. [Alone.] It shou'd be, yet, methinks, too soon
to fly me!

Too soon, as yet, to wrong my easy faith;
The more I think, the less I can conceive,
What hidden cause shou'd raise such strange despair!
Now, when her hopes have wings, and ev'ry wish
Is courted to be lively!--When I love,
And joy, and empire, press her to their bosom:
When, not alone below'd, but, ev'n, a lover:
Professing, and accepting; blest'd, and blessing:
To see her eyes, through tears, shine mystic love!
'Tis madness! and I were unworthy power,
To suffer, longer, the capricious insult!
Yet, was I blameless?---No---I was too rash;
I have felt jealousy, and spoke it, to her;
I have distrusted her---and still she loves:
Gen'rous attonement, that! and 'tis my duty

To expatiate, by a length of soft indulgence,
 The transports of a rage, which, still, was love.
 Henceforth, I, never, will suspect her false;
 Nature's plain power of charming dwells about her,
 And innocence gives force to ev'ry word:
 I owe full confidence to all, she looks,
 For, in her eye, shines truth, and ev'ry beam
 Shoots confirmation round her:---I remark'd,
 Ev'n, while she wept, her soul, a thousand times,
 Sprung to her lips, and long'd to leap to mine,
 With honest, ardent, utterance of her love.-----
 Who can possess a heart, so low, so base,
 To look such tenderness, and yet have none?

Enter Melidor, with Orasmin.

Mel. This letter, great disposer of the world!
 Address'd to Zara, and, in private, brought,
 Your faithful guards, this moment, intercepted,
 And, humbly, offer, to your sovereign eye.

Of. Come nearer; give it me -- To Zara.---Rise!
 Bring it with speed--Shame on your flatt'ring distance--

[Advancing, and snatching the letter.]

Be honest--- and approach me, like a subject,
 Who serves the prince, yet, not forgets the man.

Mel. One of the christian slaves, whom, late, your
 bounty

Releas'd from bondage, sought, with heedful guile,
 Unnotic'd, to deliver it-- Discover'd
 He waits, in chains, his doom from your decree.

Of. Leave me-- I tremble, as if something fatal,
 Were meant me, from this letter-- shou'd I read it?

Oras. Who knows, but it contains some happy
 truth,

That may remove all doubts, and calm your heart?

Of. Be it, as 'twill---it shall be read---my hands
 Have apprehension, that outreaches mine!

Why shou'd they tremble, thus?--'Tis done--and now,
[Opens the letter.]

Fate, be thy call obey'd---Orasmin, mark----

" There is a secret passage, tow'rd the mosque,
 " That way, you might escape; and unperceiv'd,
 " Fly your observers, and fulfill our hope;
 " Despise the danger, and depend on me,
 " Who wait you, but to die, if you deceive."

Hell!

Hell! tortures! death! and Woman!--what? Orasmin?
Are we awake? heard'st thou? can this be Zara?

Oraf. Wou'd I had lost all sense---for what I heard
Has cover'd my afflicted heart with horror!

Of. Thou see'st how I am treated?

Oraf. Monstrous treason!

To an affront, like this, you cannot---must not---
Remain insensible---You, who, but now,
From the most slight suspicion, felt such pain,
Must in the horror of so black a guilt,
Find an effectual cure, and banish love.

Of. Seek her this instant---go---Orasmin, fly---

Shew her this letter---bid her read, and tremble:

Then, in the rising horrors of her guilt,

Stab her unfaithful breast---and let her die.

Say, while thou strik'st---Stay, stay---return and pity
me:

I will think, first, a moment--Let that christian
Be, freight, confronted with her--Stay--I will,
I will--I know not what!--Wou'd I were dead!
Wou'd, I had dy'd, unconscious of this shame!

Oraf. Never did prince receive so bold a wrong.

Of. See! here, detected, this infernal secret!

This fountain of her tears, which my weak heart
Mistook for marks of tenderness and pain!

Why! what a reach has woman, to deceive!

Under how fine a veil, of grief, and fear,

Did she propose retirement, 'till to-morrow!

And I, blind dotard! gave the fool's consent,

Sooth'd her, and suffer'd her to go!--She parted,

Dissolv'd in tears; and parted to betray me!

Oraf. Reflection serves but to confirm her guilt:

At length, resume yourself; awaken thought;

Affert your greatness; and resolve, like Osman.

Of. Nerestan, too--Was this the boasted honour

Of that proud christian? whom Jerusalem

Grew loud, in praising! whose half-envy'd virtue

I wonder'd at, myself! and felt disdain,

To be but, equal, to a christian's greatness!

And does he thank me thus--base infidel!

Honest, pretending, pious, praying, villain!

Yet, Zara is, a thousand times, more base,

More hypocrite, than he!--a slave! a wretch!

So low, so lost, that, ev'n the vilest labours,

In which he lay, condemn'd, could never sink him,

Beneath his native infamy--Did she not know,

What I have done, what suffer'd—for her sake?

Oraf. Cou'd you, my gracious lord! forgive my zeal,
You wou'd—

Of. I know it—Thou art right—I'll see her---
I'll tax her, in thy presence;—I'll upbraid her---
I'll let her learn---Go---find, and bring her, to me.

Oraf. Alas! my lord, disorder'd as you are,
What can you wish to say?

Of. I know not, now:

But I resolve to see her—lest she think,
Her falsehood has, perhaps, the power to grieve me.

Oraf. Believe me, sir, your threat'nings, your com-
plaints,

What will they all produce, but Zara's tears,
To quench this fancy'd anger! your lost heart,
Seduc'd, against itself, will search but reasons,
To justify the guilt, which gives it pain:
Rather conceal, from Zara, this discovery:
And let some trusty slave convey the letter,
Reclos'd, to her own hand—then, shall you learn,
Spite of her frauds, disguise, and artifice,
The firmness, or abasement, of her soul.

Of. Thy counsel charms me! we'll about it, now:
'Twill be some recompence, at least, to see
Her blushes, when detected---

Oraf. Oh! my lord,
I doubt you, in the trial—for, your heart---

Of. Distrust me not---my love, indeed, is weak,
But, honour, and disdain, more strong than Zara:
Here, take this fatal letter---chuse a slave,
Whom, yet, she never saw, and who retains
His try'd fidelity—Dispatch---be gone---

[*Exit Orafinin.*]

Now, whither shall I turn my eyes, and steps,
The surest way, to shun her; and give time
For this discovering trial?---Heav'n! she's here!

Enter Zara.

So, madam! fortune will besriend my cause,
And free me from your fetters:---You are met,
Most aptly, to dispell a new-ris'n doubt,
That claims the finest of your arts, to gloss it.
Unhappy, each, by other, it is time,
To end our mutual pain, that both may rest:
You want not generosity, but love:
My pride forgotten, my obtruded throne,

My

My favours, cares, respect, and tenderness,
 Touching your gratitude, provok'd regard;
 'Till by a length of benefits, besieg'd,
 Your heart submitted, and you thought 'twas love;
 But, you deceiv'd yourself, and injur'd me.
 There is, I'm told, an object, more deserving
 Your love, than Osinan---I wou'd know his name:
 Be just, nor trifle with my anger: teil me,
 Now, while expiring pity struggles, faint;
 While I have yet, perhaps, the pow'r to pardon:
 Give up the bold invader of my claim,
 And let him die, to save thee---Thou art known;
 Think, and resolve---While I yet speak, renounce him;
 While yet the thunder rolls, suspended, stay it;
 Let thy voice charm me, and recall my soul,
 'That turns, averse, and dwells no more on Zara.

Za. Can it be Osinan, speaks? and speaks to Zara?
 Learn, cruel! learn, that this afflicted heart,
 This heart, which heaven delights to prove, by tortures,
 Did it not love, has pride, and pow'r, to shun you:
 Alas! you will not know me! What have I
 To fear, but that unhappy love, you question?
 That love, which, only, cou'd outweigh the shame.
 I feel, while I descend, to weep my wrongs.
 I know not, whether heaven, that frowns upon me,
 Has destin'd my unhappy days for your's;
 But, be my fate, or bless'd, or curs'd, I swear,
 By honour, dearer ev'n than life, or love,
 Cou'd Zara be but mistress of herself,
 She wou'd, with cold regard, look down on kings
 And you alone excepted, fly 'em all:
 Wou'd you learn more, and open all my heart?
 Know then, that, spite of this renew'd injustice,
 I do not---cannot---wish to love you less:
 That, long before you look'd so low, as Zara,
 She gave her heart to Osinan---Yours, before
 Your benefits had bought her, or your eye
 Had thrown distinction round her; never had,
 Nor ever will acknowledge, other lover---
 And, to this sacred truth, attesting heaven!
 I call thy dreadful notice! If my heart
 Deserves reproach, 'tis for, but not from Osinan.

Of. What! does she, yet, presume to swear sincerity!
 Oh! boldness of unblushing perjury!
 Had I not seen, had I not read, such proof,
 Of her light falshood, as extinguish'd doubt,

D

I cou'd

I could not be a man, and not believe her.

Za. Alas! my lord, what cruel fears have seiz'd you?

What harsh, mysterious words were those, I heard?

Of. What fears should Osman feel, since Zara loves him?

Za. I cannot live, and answer to your voice,
In that reproachful tone!-- Your angry eye
Trembles with fury, while you talk of love.

Of. Since Zara loves him!

Za. Is it possible,
Osman should disbelieve it?--Again, again
Your late repented violence returns;
Alas! what killing frowns you dart against me!
Can it be kind? can it be just, to doubt me?

Of. No--I can doubt no longer--You may retire.

[*Exit Zara.*]

Re-enter Orasmin.

Orasmin! she's perfidious, ev'n beyond
Her sex's undiscover'd power of seeming:
She's at the topmost point of shameless artifice;
An empress, at deceiving!--Soft, and easy,
Destroying like a plague, in calm tranquility:
She's innocent, she swears---So is the fire;
It shines, in harmless distance, bright and pleasing,
Consuming nothing, till it, first, embraces--
Say! hast thou cho's'n a slave?--Is he instructed?
Haste to detect her villainess, and my wrongs.

Oras. Punctual, I have obey'd your whole command;
But, have you arm'd, my lord, your injur'd heart,
With coldness, and indifference? Can you hear,
All painless and unmov'd, the false one's shame?

Of. Orasmin! I adore her, more than ever!

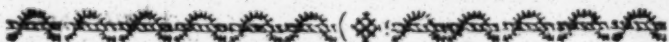
Oras. My lord! my emperor! forbid it, heaven!

Of. I have discern'd a gleam of distant hope;
This hateful christian, the light growth of France,
Proud, young, vain, amorous, conceited, rash,
Has misconceiv'd some charitable glance,
And judg'd it love, in Zara: He, alone,
Then, has offended me--Is it her fault,
If those, the charms, are indiscreet and daring?
Zara, perhaps, expected not this letter;
And I, with rashness, groundless, as its writer's,
Took fire, at my own fancy, and have wrong'd her.
Now, hear me, with attention--Soon as night

Has

Has thrown her welcome shadows o'er the palace;
 When this Nereetan, this ungrateful christian,
 Shall lurk, in expectation, near our walls,
 Be watchful, that our guards surprize, and seize him;
 Then, bound in fetters, and o'erwhelm'd with shame,
 Conduct the daring traitor to my presence;
 But above all, be sure, you hurt not Zara:
 Mindful to what supreme excess I love.
 I feel, I must confess, a kind of shame,
 And blush, at my own tenderness;—but, faith,
 Howe'er it seems deceiv'd, were weak, as I am,
 Could it admit distrust, to blot its face,
 And give appearance way, till proof takes place.

End of the FOURTH ACT.



ACT V. SCENE I.

Zara, Selima.

Za. SOOTH me, no longer, with this vain desire;
 To a recluse, like me, who dares, henceforth,
 Presume admission!—the Seraglio's shut--
 Barr'd, and unpassable—as death, to time!
 My brother ne'er must hope to see me, more:---
 How now! what unknown slave accosts us, here!

Enter Melidor.

Mel. This letter, trusted to my hands, receive,
 In secret witness, I am, wholly, yours.

[Zara reads the letter.]

Sel. *[Aside.]* Thou, everlasting ruler of the world!
 Shed thy wish'd mercy on our hopeless tears;
 Redeem us from the hands of hated infidels,
 And save my princess from the breast of Osman.

Za. I wish, my friend, the comfort of your counsel.

Sel. Retire--you shall be call'd---wait near--go, leave
 us. *[Exit Melidor.]*

Za. Read this—and tell me, what I ought to answer?

For I would gladly hear my brother's voice.

Sel. Say rather, you wou'd hear the voice of heav'n.
 'Tis not your brother, calls you, but your God:

Za. I know it, nor resist his awful will;
 Thou know'st that, I have bound my soul, by oath;

But, can I - ought I---to engage myself,
My brother, and the christians in this danger?

Sel. 'Tis not their danger, that alarms your fear;
Your love speaks loudest, to your shrinking soul;
I know your heart, of strength, to hazard all,
But, it has let in traitors, who surrender,
On poor pretence of safety:---Learn, at least,
To understand the weakness that deceives you:
You tremble to offend your haughty lover,
Whom wrongs, and outrage, but endear the more;
Yes---you are blind to Osinan's cruel nature,
That Tartar's fierceness, that obscures his bounties:
This tiger, savage, in his tenderness,
Courts, with contempt, and threatens, amidst softness;
Yet, cannot your neglected heart efface
His fated, fix'd impression!

Za. What reproach

Can I, with justice, make him?---I, indeed,
Have given him cause to hate me!---
Was not his throne, was not his temple, ready?
Did not he court his slave, to be a queen?
And have not I declin'd it?---', who ought
To tremble, conscious of affronted power!
Have not I triumph'd o'er his pride, and love?
Seen him submit his own high will, to mine?
And sacrifice his wishes, to my weakness?

Sel. Talk we, no more, of this unhappy passion:
What resolution will your virtue take?

Za. All things combine, to sink me to despair:
From the Seraglio, death, alone, will free me.
I long to see the christians' happy climes;
Yet, in the moment, while I form that prayer,
I sigh a secret wish, to languish, here:
How sad a state is mine! my restless soul
All ign'rant, what to do, or what to wish!
My only perfect sense is, that of pain.
O guardian heav'n! protect my brother's life:
For I will meet him, and fulfill his prayer.
Then, when, from Solyma's unfriendly walls,
His absence shall unbind his sister's tongue,
Osinan shall learn the secret of my birth,
My faith unshaken, and my deathless love;
He will approve my choice, and pity me,
I'll send my brother word, he may expect me:
Call in the faithful slave---God of my fathers!

[Exit Selima.

Let thy hand save me, and thy will direct. *Enter*

Enter Selima, and Melidor.

Go--tell the christian, who intrusted thee,
That Zara's heart is fix'd, nor shrinks at danger;
And, that my faithful friend will, at the hour,
Expect, and introduce him, to his wish.
Away---the Sultan comes; he must not find us.

[Exeunt Zara and Selima.]

Enter Osman, and Orasmin.

Os. Swifter, ye hours, move on; my fury glows
Impatient, and wou'd push the wheels of time:
How now! what message dost thou bring? speak boldly--
What answer gave she, to the letter, sent her?

Mel. She blush'd, and trembled, and grew pale, and
 paus'd;

Then blush'd, and read it; and, again, grew pale;
And wept, and smil'd, and doubted, and resolv'd:
For, after all this race of vary'd passions,
When she had sent me out, and call'd me back,
Tell him (she cry'd) who has intrusted thee,
That Zara's heart is fix'd, nor shrinks at danger;
And, that my faithful friend will, at the hour,
Expect, and introduce him, to his wish.

Os. Enough---be gone---I have no ear for more---

[To the slave.]

Leave me, thou, too, Orasmin.---Leave me life,

[To Orasmin.]

For, ev'ry mortal aspect moves my hate:
Leave me, to my distraction---I grow mad,
And cannot bear the visage of a friend.
Leave me, to rage, despair, and shame, and wrongs;
Leave me, to seek myself---and then mankind.

[Alone.]

Who am I?---Heav'n! Who am I? What resolve?
Zara! Nerestan! Sound these words, like names
Decreed to join!---Why pause I?---Perth Zara:---
Wou'd, I could tear her image from my heart:---
'Twere happier, not to live, at all, than live
Her scorn, the sport of an ungrateful false one!
And sink the sovereign, in a woman's property.

Re-enter Orasmin.

Orasmin!---Friend! return---I cannot bear
This absence, from thy reason: 'I was unkind,
'I was cruel, to obey me, thus distress'd,
And wanting pow'r to think, when I had lost thee:'

How

How goes the hour? Has he appear'd? This rival!
Perish the shameful sound—This villain christian!
Has he appear'd, below?

Oraf. Silent, and dark,
'T h' unbreathing world is hush'd, as if it heard,
And listen'd to your sorrows.

Of. O, treach'rous night!
Thou lend'st thy ready veil, to ev'ry treason,
And teeming mischiefs thrive, beneath thy shade.
Orafmin! Prophet! Reason! Truth! and Love!
After such length of benefits, to wrong me!
How have I over-rated, how mistaken,
The merit of her beauty!--Did I not
Forget I was a monarch? Did I remember,
That Zara was a slave?—I gave up all;
Gave up tranquility, distinction, pride,
And fell, the shameful victim of my love!

Oraf. Sir! Sovereign! sultan! my imperial master!
Reflect on your own greatness, and disdain
The distant provocation---

Of. Heard'st thou nothing?

Oraf. My lord?

Of. A voice, like dying groans?

Oraf. I listen, but can hear nothing.

Of. Again!--look out--he comes---

Oraf. Nor tread of mortal foot---nor voice I hear:
The still Scraglio lies, profoundly plung'd,
In death-like silence! nothing stirs.---The air
Is soft, as infants' sleep, no breathing wind
Steals, thro' the shadows, to awaken night.

Of. Horrors, a thousand times more dark than these,
Benight my suffering soul—Thou dost not know
To what excess of tenderness, I lov'd her:
I knew no happiness, but what she gave me,
Nor cou'd have felt a mis'ry, but for her!
Pity this weakness—mine are tears, *Orafmin!*
That fall not oft nor lightly---

Oraf. Tears!--Oh, heaven!

Of. The first, which, ever, yet, unman'd my eyes!
O! pity Zara—pity me—*Orafmin,*
These but forerun the tears of destin'd blood.

Oraf. Oh, my unhappy lord!--I tremble for you--

Of. Do---tremble at my sufferings, at my love;
At my revenge, too, tremble—for, 'tis due,
And will not be deluded.

Oraf. Hark! I hear

The

The steps of men, along the neighb'ring wall!—

Of. Fly—seize him—'tis Nerestan! wait no chains,
But, drag him down, to my impatient eye.

[*Exit Orasmin.*]

Enter Zara, and Selima, in the dark.

Za. Where art thou, Selima? give me thy hand;
It is so dark, I tremble, as I step,
With tears, and startings, never felt, 'till now!

Of. Damnation! 'tis her voice! the well known
sound,

That has, so often, charm'd me into baseness!

Oh! the perfidious hypocrite!--she goes,
To meet the inviting infidel!--now, now,

[*Drawing a dagger.*]

Revenge, stand firm, and intercept his wishes:---

Revenge! on whom?—no matter---earth and heaven
Wou'd blush, shou'd I forbear: now---Zara, now;

[*Drops the dagger.*]

I must not-- cannot strike, the starting steel,

Unwilling, flies my hand, and thuns to wound her.

Za. This is the private path---come nearer, lead me--
Are we not notic'd, think'st thou?

Sel. Fear not, madam;

It cannot, now, be long, ere we shall meet him,

Of. That word has giv'n me, back, my ebbing
rage-- [Recover's the dagger.]

Za. I walk in terror, and my heart forebodes:

Who's there?---Nerestan! is it you?---Oh! welcome.

Of. [*Snatching her.*] This to thy heart---'Tis not the
traitor meets thee,

'Tis the betray'd---who writes it, in thy blood.

Za. O, gracious heaven! receive my parting soul.

[*Dies.*]

Of. Soul?---then revenge has reach'd thee --I will,
now,

Haste, from this fatal place---I cannot leave her!

Whom did I strike? Was this the act of love?

Swallow me, earth!-- She's silent---Zara's dead!

And should I live, to see returning day,

'Twill shew me but her blood!--new me, left joy'less,

In a wide, empty world, with nothing round me,

But penitence, and pain---and, yet, 'twas just:—

Hark!--Destiny has sent her lover to me,

To fill my vengeance, and restore my joy.

Enter

Enter Orasmin with Nerestan.

Approach, thou wretch! thou more than curs'd! come near—

Thou! who, in gratitude, for freedom gain'd,
Hast giv'n me miseries, beyond thy own!
Thou heart of hero, with a traitor's soul!
Go—reap thy due reward, prepare to suffer
Whate'er inventive malice can inflict,
To make thee feel thy death, and perish, slow,
Are my commands obey'd?

Oras. All is prepar'd.

Of. Thy wanton eyes look round, in search of her,
Whose love, descending to a slave, like thee,
From my dishonour'd hand, receiv'd her doom.
See! where she lies—

Neref. O, fatal, rash, mistake!

Of. Dost thou behold her, slave?

Neref. Unhappy sister!

Of. Sister!—didst thou say sister? If thou did'st,
Bless me with deafness, heaven!

Neref. Tyrant! I did—

She was my sister—All, that, now, is left thee,
Dispatch—From my distracted heart, drain, next,
The remnant of the royal, christian, blood:
Old Lusignan, expiring, in my arms,
Sent his too wretched son, with his last blessing,
To his, now, murder'd daughter!—

Wou'd I had seen the bleeding innocent!
I wou'd have liv'd, to speak to her, in death;
Wou'd have awaken'd in her languid heart,
A livelier sense of her abandon'd God:

That God, who, left by her, forsook her, too,
And gave the poor, lost, sufferer, to thy rage.

Of. Thy sister?—Lusignan, her father—Selima!
Can this be true;—and have I wrong'd thee, Zara?

Sel. Thy love was all the cloud, 'twixt her, and
heav'n!

Of. Be dumb—for thou art base to add distraction,
To my, already, more than bleeding heart:
And was thy love sincere?—What, then, remains?

Neref. Why shou'd a tyrant hesitate, on murder!
There, now, remains, but mine, of all the blood,
Which, through thy father's cruel reign, and thine,
Has never ceas'd to stream on Syria's sands;
Restore a wretch to his unhappy race;

Not

Nor hope, that torments, after such a scene,
Can force one feeble groan, to feast thy anger.
I waste my fruitless words, in empty air;
The tyrant, o'er the bleeding wound, he made,
Hangs his unmoving eye, and heeds not me.

Of. O, Zara!—

Oraf. Alas! my lord, return—whither wou'd grief
Transport your gen'rous heart!—This christian dog—

Of. Take off his fetters, and observe my will:
To him, and all his friends, give instant liberty:
Pour a profusion of the richest gifts
On these unhappy christians; and, when heap'd
With vary'd benefits, and charg'd with riches,
Give 'em safe conduct to the nearest port.

Oraf. But, fir—

Of. Reply not, but obey.—
Fly—nor dispute thy master's last command,
Thy prince, who orders—and thy friend, who loves
thee!

Go—lose no time—farewell—begone—and thou!
Unhappy warrior;—yet, less lost, than I!—
Haste, from our bloody land—and, to thy own,
Convey this poor, pale, object of my rage:
Thy king, and all his christians, when they hear
Thy miseries, shall mourn 'em with their tears;
But, if thou tell'st 'em mine, and tell'st 'em, truly,
They, who shall hate my crime, shall pity me.
Take, too, this poignard with thee, which my hand
Has stain'd with blood, far dearer than my own;
Tell 'em—with this, I murder'd her I lov'd;
The noblest, and most virtuous, among women!
The soul of innocence, and pride of truth!
Tell 'em, I laid my empire at her feet.
Tell 'em, I plung'd my dagger in her blood;
Tell 'em, I so ador'd,—and thus reveng'd her.

Rev'rence this hero—and conduct him safe. *[Stabs himself. Dies.]*

Neres. Direct me, great inspirer of the soul!
How shou'd I act, how judge in this distress?
Amazing grandeur! and detested rage!
Ev'n I, amidst my tears, admire this foe,
And mourn his death, who liv'd to give me woe.

End of the FIFTH Act.

EPILOGUE.

EPILOGUE.

HERE, take a surfeit, sirs, of being jealous,
And shun the pains, that plague those Turkish
fellows:

Where love and death join hands, their darts confounding,
Save us, good heav'n! from this new way of wounding!
Curs'd climate!—where, to cards, a lone-left woman
Has only, one of her black guards, to summon!
Sighs, and fits mop'd, with her tame beast to gaze at:
And, that cold treat, is all the game she plays at!
For—should she once, some abler hand be trying,
Poignard's the word! and the first deal is—dying!

'Slife! should the bloody whim get ground, in Britain,
Where woman's freedom has such heights, to sit on;
Daggers, provok'd, wou'd bring on desolation:
And, murder'd beles un-people half the nation!—

Fain wou'd I hope this play to move compassion;—
And live to hunt suspicion out of fashion.—
Four motives, strongly recommend, to lovers,
Hate of this weakness, that our scene discovers:

First then—A woman will or won't—depend on't:
If she will do't, she will:—and, there's an end on't.
But, if she won't—since safe and sound your trust is,
Fear is affront: and jealousy injustice.

Next,—He who bids his dear do, what she pleases,
Blunts wedlock's edge; and, all its torture eases:
For—not to feel your suff'ring's, is the same,
As not to suffer:—All the difference—name.

Thirdly—The jealous husband wrongs his honour;
No wife goes lame, without some hurt upon her:
And, the malicious world will still be guessing,
Who, oft, dines out, dislikes her own cook's dressing.

Fourthly, and lastly,—to conclude my lecture,
If you wou'd fix the inconstant wife—respect her.
She who perceives her virtues over-rated,
Will fear to have th' account more justly stated:
And, borrow'ing, from her pride, the good wife's seeming,
Grow really such—to merit your esteeming.

F I N I S.

